Forordning om troldfolk og deres medvidere
”Trolddomsforordningen”

Sorcery Regulation – Witchcraft Act
Copenhagen, Denmark 1617

What follows is the Sorcery Regulation text, translated from the modernized Danish version with word explanations found on danmarkshistorie.lex.dk. Take into account that I might have made mistakes trying to understand the text. For the source, go to:
https://danmarkshistorien.lex.dk/Trolddomsforordningen,_12._oktober_1617

Background: The Sorcery Regulation was introduced on October 12, 1617. The intent of the new regulation was to crack down on sorcery in the kingdom of Denmark. Harmful sorcery was already punishable by death, but the new regulation introduced two main changes, as I understand it: 1) "White magic", which was popular among the population, was now outlawed and punishable by fine and exile, and 2) All authority officials were now required to report and prosecute any offenders they became aware of, or risk being punished themselves as co-conspirators to sorcery.

Regulation on sorcerers and their associates

(The Witchcraft Act/Sorcery Regulation) (translated and slightly simplified text, including word explainations from: ”danmarkshistorien lex dk”. Take into account that i might have mistaken something) -Oct 12, 2025

October 12, 1617. Copenhagen, Denmark

Since daily experience shows that some secret arts, such as **saying** *(to recite magical formulas and spells to heal, protect, etc.)*, **to mane** *(to conjure up/to make supernatural beings such as spirits obey one's will by means of spells etc.; e.g. to make them appear or disappear)*, **to measure** *(a magical measurement using a special kind of thread, partly used as a remedy against illness and evil spirits, also used as a means of divination)*, **characters** *(to inscribe or write characters, here with magical meaning.),* **to paint** *(to make images, here with magical meaning.)*, to **call back** *(to call back and show something by supernatural means.)*, to **choose certain days** of the week *(to designate certain days of the week as being lucky or unlucky.)*, etc., (since these things) - are constantly taking place and are treated as indifferent and permitted for the reason that they are believed to benefit and heal people and animals, and also because certain words of God are sometimes used and abused, notwithstanding that such arts are strictly forbidden by God Almighty, as they direct and divert from God and his natural help and medicine, to the Devil and (his) secret unnatural advice and means. Furthermore, these prescribed arts are found to be the first alphabet of all sorcerers, and to be the **true** origin and beginning of the evil and unfortunate work of sorcery. Since in this way God's wrath, and the abomination could be stopped, and prevented with God's help, - (because of all the forementioned) - we have been forced to think of serious and serving means and ways and therefore our Royal Council of the Realm* *(see note beneath)* thus determined and decreed, - and so hereby determine and decree:

1. That if after this day, any one is found to be skilled and experienced in the prescribed arts and to practice and use them, then those who are of nobility shall stand trial and be punished according to what is known and decreed by us and our royal council over them; the others who are not of nobility shall have their estates violated and shall flee all our kingdoms, lands and principalities. Those who are accomplices of such people and use or allow their advice and deeds to be used for themselves (or their people), shall, **the first time**, if they are of nobility, stand publicly to confess their crimes, and commit to the nearest hospital o**ne thousand dalers** (311 USD); the others shall in the same way stand publicly to confess and be punished according to their wealth; **the second time,** if any one is found guilty in the same offense, then they, whoever they may be, shall be subjected, without exception, to the same **torment and punishment** as those who practice (and are experienced in) the arts.

2. As for true sorcerers who have consorted with the devil or associate with him, they shall be dealt with according to the law and the recess (note: often death by fire); but those who entangle themselves with such people and dare to have anything accomplished by their sorcery shall be punished (on their neck) without any mercy.

3. And so that our solemn will and decree may be the better complied with for the glory of God, we bid and hereby strictly command all our commanders and knights, as well as bishops, deans, priests, mayors, councilmen, bailiffs and all others who are in **authority and commission,** that they all, according to their conditions, **as soon as they become aware of it,** report, prosecute and have punished **all those** whom our decree indicates, if they themselves will not stand by us for that, as those who are accomplices of such people and consent with them.

Note: From the 13th century until the introduction of absolute monarchy in 1660, **the Council of the Realm** was the body that, together with the king, held legislative and judicial power in the Kingdom of Denmark. The **Council of the Realm** elected the king, and its power and influence were established in a charter that the king had to sign as a condition of being elected.